

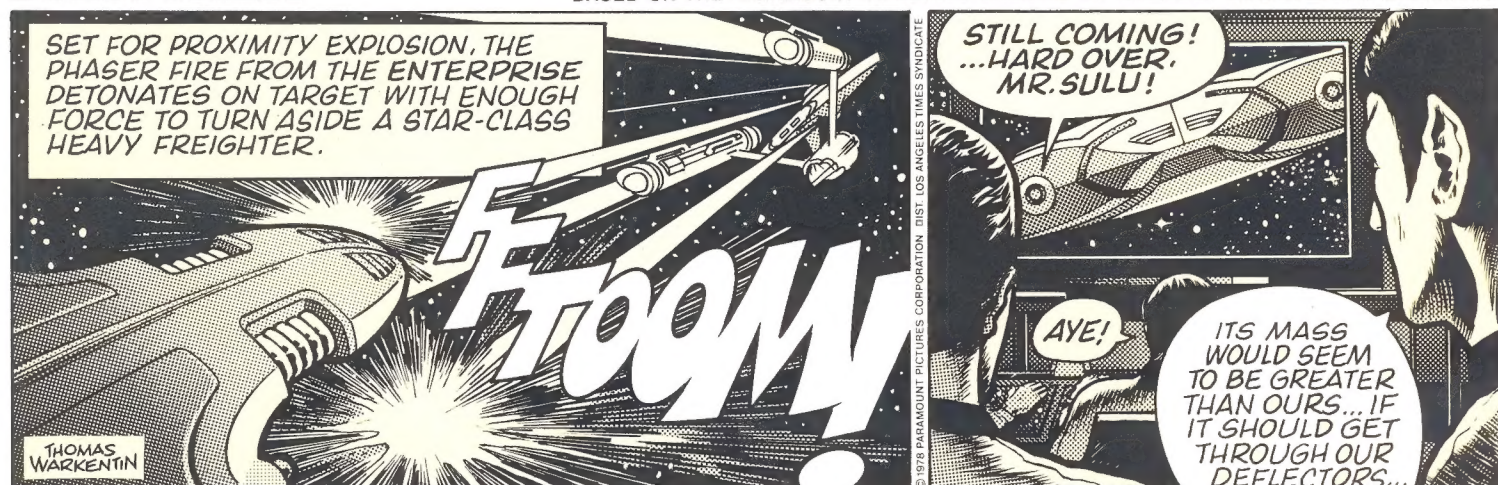


SEE YOU IN THE FUNNY PAPERS

If at first you don't succeed—try, try again. But if at first you *do* succeed—what do you do? If you are Mandala Productions, you just keep on keeping on. Originally, the inventive California-based company hit with the “Fotonovel” concept, borrowing the format of foreign Photonoels—photographs outfitted with word balloons, arranged in story sequence—to package episodes of *Star Trek* in high quality paperback form. After securing Paramount Pictures’ approval and Gene Roddenberry’s cooperation, Bantam Books bought the idea, and has now published nine volumes packed with full-color adventures of the famous SF show. Mandala, not a company to rest on its laurels, then decided to take the proposition one step further by producing a daily newspaper “fotostrip.” Inspired by their publications’ success in book stores, Lazlo Papas, the company’s president, started investigating the print possibilities in mid-1977. By October it was clear that quality still-photo reproduction would be technically

unfeasible for even the biggest of the nation’s newspapers. But that didn’t stop Mandala. The concept was still viable—if drawings could be used instead of photographs. The search began for the craftsman to bring *Star Trek* into the ranks of *Peanuts*, *Dick Tracy* and *The Wizard of Id*. In his search, Papas visited four cities in three countries, screening over 100 artists until just the right man was found. The best man for the job was Thomas Warkentin, a commercial artist who Mr. Papas found practically in his own back yard. Warkentin was finishing up a degree in physics in Venice, California, when he was given both the writing and drawing responsibilities for what Mandala hopes will be its next major triumph. Under the distribution auspices of the Los Angeles Mirror Press Syndicate, Lazlo predicts that *all new* adventures of the Starship Enterprise will be appearing in 600 papers by June. To explore strange new outlets, to seek out new fans and new readers . . . to boldly go into full-color on Sunday. With a little more of their innovation and integrity, Mandala may see to it personally that the *Star Trek* phenomenon never ends.







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